of his father, which is considered as *biha*, very bad), he must not take any part in the burial, though he might be the regular "master of the mourning." Relatives will drive him away because they have pity on him, they know what misfortune threatens him. It is a terrible taboo! There are medicines to remove this contamination ; the *yila* is removed by them, but the *biha* (bad action) remains! However in the case of the disease called *mpondjo*, (which I believe to be the lupus), medicines are of no avail ; should a man visit his rival, who is suffering from it, he will die. We have also seen the terrible complications which are believed to take place at the birth of children, when there has been a question of adultery. (P. 40.)

These great taboos show that there is a deep feeling amongst the Thongas that promiscuity of any kind is a bad and a dangerous thing. Even in the case of *gangisa*, boys are censured when two of them court the same girl.

10) Divorce.

Adultery is one of the causes of divorce. The guilty woman, instead of obeying her legitimate husband and helping him to get his compensation, may choose to go to her lover and live with him. This leads to an immediate divorce. The husband goes to the parents of the unfaithful wife and claims his lobolo. They have perhaps no money to give. However they will try to get it as soon as possible, even if it is by the dissolution of the marriage of their own son ; they will perhaps send back his young wife to her parents and claim the lobolo paid for her, in order to meet the claim of the angry husband (See Part JJ). It would seem easier to go to the thief and claim from him the lobola for the adulteress whom he has stolen (tlhuba). But a thief is not a reliable man! If he has stolen, it proves that he had nothing (1). (See Appendix VIII.)

Divorce frequently takes place for more trivial reasons, for

(1) Women of low morals are called in Ronga gwababana, prostitute. There are plenty of them all round Lourenço Marques, where morality has sunk to a very low level; but this is the result of degeneration.

621 1) *Social rites.* The muti, as we have seen, is a little organised
596 community having its own laws, amongst which the most important
833 seems to be the law of hierarchy. The elder brother is the undisputed
768 master and no one can supersede him. He is the owner of the village. No one must "steal it" from him. Should any one do so, the whole community would suffer and no children would be born : the life of the organism would be deeply affected. That is the reason why the headman must go first with his principal wife to have relations with her in the new village, and thus *take possession* of it or *tie* it. For this same reason, when the headman dies, the village *must* move. It is taboo to remain in it. Until the inheritance has been distributed, it is still *his home* (kwa kwe) ; but as soon as this ceremony has taken place, the villagers must go away, and close the door with a thorny branch. The part played by the
621 principal wife in all these ceremonies is most remarkable. It is
595 absolutely imperative that the headman should "tie the village" with her,
562 and not with another of his spouses. Should she be very old, the law
768 must be observed all the same ; should she be ill, and unable to have sexual
764 relations, the village simply cannot be moved. In the Northern clans we see her taking the shield and the assagai, closing the village and "giving it" to the inmates, even performing a sacrifice and praying to the gods. It is very rare to see a woman presiding at a public religious ceremony ; but she is the owner of the village as well as the headman. Moving is imperative when she dies as well as after the death of the headman. The main gate must also be closed and a new entrance made in the fence to be used during the year of mourning ; in the case of her death, this opening must be made on the left of the regular *mharana*, whilst, when the husband dies, it is made on the right side ; just as in the hut, when the corpse is removed for burial. (See page 138.)

351 2) *Protective rites.* These are those which concern the fence. This
789 fence does not afford material protection. The branches dry up very
621 soon and, in the case of a bush-fire, for instance, they would do more harm than good. It is a spiritual protection, a barrier of charms, of magic influences, to prevent the entrance of wizards and of all the hostile powers of the bush. We shall understand this better when treating of witchcraft superstitions. (Part VI.)

182 3) *Passage rites.* The reader will have been surprised to observe
621 amongst the ceremonies of the moving of villages, many features
829 which we have already met with in the circumcision school, or in the mourning customs. At first sight there seems to be no relation whatever between the moving of a village, the initiation of boys and the

182 mourning over the dead. The inner connexion existing between these
627 three events is that, in all of them, there is a passage. Hence the
783 resemblance of the rites. This striking similarity is, to my mind, the
829 best proof that the passage rites constitute a peculiar category. When a headman has decided to move, he leaves his old kraal, he *separates* from it, not by the ordinary gate, but by a special opening made at the back of the village. He is not allowed to return to it again. Then, for him and for all his people, begins a *marginal period* of one month or more, the buhlapfa (notice the prefix *bu* which indicates a period here, as in busahana [page 42]). We see the village, during these few weeks, put beyond the pale of society. The ordinary laws are suspended, (licencious songs), and many special taboos are enforced (prohibition of sexual relations, fire taboo, water taboo, etc.), just as in the period of mourning; at last the village returns to the ordinary course of life by a final act of purification, the mysterious *hlamba ndjaka*, which seems to be the most powerful means of cleansing the collective life. This last ceremony shows that, here, the marginal period has been instituted on account of the uncleaness, the impurity of the old village. Let us remember that in most cases the village has been moved on account of death! All the adult members of the social organism take part in the cleansing (at least in the Northern clans) and so the village begins a new and purified life. No one can deny the deep significance of all these rites and the mystic conception of the Thonga village.

C. THE HEADMAN AND THE ORGANISATION OF THE VILLAGE.

596 Each village thus possesses its superior (hosi), its master. He
576 is called *munumzane* or *numzane*, a curious expression which is
621 also employed in Zulu; it means owner of a kraal, gentleman,
618 and is often used in saluting grown up men. We have seen the mystic relation between the headman and his *muti*. The village, the muti, is the primitive social organism. The clan (tiko), which is the gathering of all the *miti*, reproduces all the features of the
622 village life on a large scale. So the *numzane* corresponds to the
596 *hosi*, chief of the tribe. Both certainly possess great authority,

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

726 On the other hand sexual relations, which are allowed in ordinary
829 life, become taboo. This period of fighting seems really to be
considered as a marginal period for the whole tribe.
834 It is so par excellence *for the warriors* and I think that many of the rites imposed upon them are to be explained in this way. As we saw, the period of margin is generally preceded by separation rites. (See page 74.) Some of these, which are very characteristic, are performed when the army starts : the leave-taking from the General with wild shouts, the custom of swallowing a piece of meat without touching it with the hands and taking an emetic afterwards, that of jumping over the ntjhopfa branch, the medicine of oblivion! etc. The triumphant return, the partaking of the meat of the oxen which have been taken, may be the aggregation ceremonies, viz., the acts by which the warriors return to their ordinary life.

726 Passage rites are still more distinct *in the case of the slayers* ; but
829 their condition is worse, as it implies the idea of defilement following
upon murder and is attended with the danger proceeding from the *nuru*.
304 They are "hot" (an expression which also applies to the tabooed woman
182 during her menses etc.); they are "black" (an epithet which also desig-
783 nates the grave-diggers, the bereaved mother, etc.). Hence a *seclusion* much more complete, a true period of margin with many alimentary and sexual (1) taboos. Possibly the incisions on the brow are an old kind of tatooing in connexion with this marginal period, similar to the inguinal incision of the widows (p. 201). The purification rites are of the same kind as those of the mourners, and particularly of the grave-diggers. The return to society, after their seclusion, is marked by rites of separation from the marginal period, which no doubt aim at getting rid of the defilement connected therewith. (Exposure of the *mizilo* outside the village in the bush.) Is it not striking to notice the correspondence between these rites in their peculiar sequence and those of the circumcision school, of mourning, of moving a village ?

See, as a conclusion to Part III, Practical Conclusions, No. VI : "The New era and the Future of the South African Tribe."

834 (1) The sexual taboos are so severe that, after the Mocudi battle, one of the slayers
727 took great offence at a man who dared to touch his food, as the man was living in his home and had relations with his wife. The slayer was afraid that this contact might cause his own death or bring misfortune to his family.

3) The Punishment of Witchcraft.

754 What is the punishment inflicted on those convicted of the
683 crime of witchcraft? Let us remember that this is a crime, an act of homicide, doubly punishable by the Court. Chief Shiluvane had definitely prohibited it by a decree in the following words : "I do not allow anyone to die in my country except on account of old age. So let the baloyi at once cease their enchantments, or I shall kill them all." In former times the crime of witchcraft was punished by death and the culprit was immediately hanged. The last to be punished in this way, in the Nkuna clan, was Mudebane (I. p. 443), and Mankhelu himself executed him. The wizards are impaled or drowned, as the case may be. Flogging and banishment were also resorted to when the crime was not so heinous. In Khosen wizards were expelled from the villages and roamed about the country, sleeping in the ruins, mocked at and insulted by the children, and oxen sinews were tied round their biceps so tightly that they entered their flesh and caused great suffering.

177.68 One of my informants (Fenis), who drank the mondjo at the death of Zihlahla, chief of the Mpfumo district, about 1870, told me that the heaviest penalty imposed on the wizards on that occasion was a fine of one or two goats, or of one pound sterling. He attributed this leniency to the proximity of the Whites. The civilised Governments in Africa have certainly done their best to put down this method of smelling-out wizards, and their efforts have been by no means without result. Native chiefs are now content with fining the wizards £ 10 or £ 15, half of which remains in their own pockets. I heard of one of them who claimed to be a Christian, but did not object to the substantial increase to his civil list brought about by witchcraft suits.

IV. *Concluding Remarks on Witchcraft.*

754 Witchcraft is one of the greatest curses of Native Life. I attribute the
● 182 enormous hold which this superstition has taken on the mind of the Bantu to three causes : 1) The *Animistic beliefs* explained on p. 367

which are at the root of the idea of the double existence of the baloyi. 2) *Cannibalism*, which has perhaps never existed as a general custom in South Africa, but has been practised sporadically in times of famine, and has left a feeling of disgust and horror in the minds of later generations ; this feeling is also manifested in the numerous Ogre tales. 3) The *terrible hatred* of which the Native mind is capable. If some people venture to accuse members of these tribes of such awful acts as those of killing and eating human beings, it is because they know that a Native who hates would not shrink from anything to satisfy his desire of vengeance.

We must however remember that the witchcraft superstition was universally found amongst our own forefathers, and that there were epidemics of it in the XIVth, XVth and even the XVIth centuries, hundreds of wizards having been tortured and burnt in most European countries, after having been tried before regular Courts. I have tried to establish a parallel between the ideas and practices of witchcraft in French Switzerland and those of the Thongas. The results of the comparison are very curious. I cannot give them all here, and must refer the reader to the Paris Revue *Foi et Vie*, No. of October, 1910, in which they were published. The most striking difference is this. Amongst Thongas, we are still in the *predualistic age*, viz., the opposition between a good, moral Spirit (God) and bad, wicked spirits (demons, Satan) does not yet exist in Religion. So the power of God is not invoked to reveal the wizards, or to protect the innocent against their spells. But the same animistic conceptions evidently formed the basis of European as of African witchcraft.

This superstition has a deadly effect on Native life. It is a continual source of trouble, fear, quarrels, sorrow. Strange to say, it has been on the increase in recent years. It ruins the villages. — "Formerly," say my informants, "you could see villages of ten or twenty huts. Now the accusations of witchcraft have broken them up. Each man builds his own hut apart, from fear of being bewitched, or because he is suspected of being a noyi (1)."

(1) The evil affects the Native Christian communities also, fostering hatred amongst them, and this animistic doctrine is much more difficult to overcome than ancestrolatry, which is very quickly and completely abandoned by converts.

Some Christian Natives are so convinced that witchcraft is a reality that they interpret Matt. X. 28 by saying that "those who kill the body and who must not be feared" are the baloyi. Unhappily a Zulu translation of the Greek word φαρμακοί by the word corresponding to baloyi, in Revelation XXII, v. 15, confirmed them in

the material representation of his personality. By this contact the patient has in a way become a part of the "complexus Bula" and what happens to the bones will also happen to him ; what is said by the bones will henceforth apply directly to him. This magic conception of Nature is probably the profound and secret reason why the diviners believe so firmly in their art. 787 789 791

On the other hand, this art is so perfect that bone-throwers can derive very great satisfaction from the practice of it. It must be born in mind that, in fact, all the elements of Native life are represented by the objects contained in the basket of divinatory bones. It is a resumé of their whole social order, of all their institutions, and the bones, when they fall, provide them with an instantaneous picture of all that may befall them. This system is so elaborate that I do not hesitate to say that, together with their language, their folklore, their lobola customs and their burial rites, it is the product of their psychic life which shows most intelligence. If the premises of divination are accepted, astragalomancy seems to me vastly superior to cheiromancy and all the other systems which have been invented by us. It is also superior to the divination by four tablets of ivory or wood practised by a certain number of South African tribes, a description of which will be found in Appendix VI (1). 787 181

But if this system of divination is a proof of great intelligence, it must be confessed that *its results*, as shown in the psychic life of the tribe, 787 155 182

(1) There are some grounds for thinking that divination by astragalus bones is very old in the history of mankind. The Greeks practised *astragalomancy*. In a paper to which I shall refer in App. VI, the Rev. N. Roberts mentions the temple of Dodona, in which, according to Cicero, there was a large brass basin with the statue of a man upon it, and this man held in his hands a whip with three straps from which hung small astragalus bones. When these bones were set in motion by the wind, they struck against the basin and the sounds thus produced had a prophetic character. This was astragalomancy, but of a very different kind from that just described. Aristotle makes frequent allusions to the astragalus bone and says, inter alia, that one of its sides, named *coon*, represents the figure 6 ; another, named *chion*, the figure 1, etc. This shows that in his time the astragalus bone was already identified with the dice. The dice, also called *αστραγαλος* in Greek is simply an astragalus bone whose sides have been cut so as to form a perfect cube. We find traces of the use of the astragalus even further back in the past. Angelo Mosso, quoted by the same author, asserts that he found many astragalus in Italy, where they were used in connection with primitive religion as far back as the neolithic period. The discovery in the lake of Neuchâtel [illegible] collection of more than thirty astragalus in the lake dwellers' station of Auvernier may be a proof that these bones did in truth play a part in the customs of primitive humanity. If this is so, then the Bantus have preserved the astragalus as they did the wooden pillow of the old Egyptians, the ancestrolatry of the Mousterians and the "mbaya" (p. 93) of the Libyans. The astragalus is still employed in play to represent cattle by Swiss children in the Canton of Valais, and I am told that the South African Boers have the same custom, and call these bones dol-osse.

787 are most *deplorable*. These practices kill in ovo any serious attempt at
155 the use of reason or experience in practical life. Native doctors might
182 have arrived at a useful and beneficent knowledge of the medicinal virtues of vegetables, if they had studied them carefully. But why should they trouble themselves with study, when a single cast of the bones at once tells them what root must be taken to cure the disease? (Compare my account of diagnosis, p. 475). Further, the bones annihilate the moral conscience, or, at any rate, they prevent any healthy development of this precious faculty. When overtaken by misfortune the Bantu might be moved to introspection to review his conduct, and see what wrong actions he had committed. From this self-examination, moral progress might result. But such trouble is useless! The bones are thrown. They reveal that misfortune was caused by such and such spiritual influences, wizards, gods, defilement, Heaven, that it must be combated by such and such means, — a drug, or a packet of drugs, a victim, male or female, offered by so and so, in such and such a manner. This is all-sufficient and the conscience remains dormant (1) as does the reason. I am convinced that, however high the degree of astuteness engendered by the divinatory bones may be, they have been extremely detrimental to the intellectual and moral welfare of the Natives.

This leads us to our last chapter, in which the questions of Taboo and Morality will be considered.

(1) Wishing to know if the bones were sometimes used to obtain moral guidance, I once asked Mankhelu: "As you throw your bones on every occasion, would you consult them when going to a beer party? There might be trouble, perhaps quarrels, blows... If you wish to avoid these would the bones tell you to abstain from the party?" He laughed heartily. "No!" said he. "If I saw that the men were drinking too much I should leave before they were quite drunk." I have some doubts if he would really have done so, but it remains clear that the bones have nothing to do with morality!